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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE NEED FOR INDUSTRIAL CO-OPERATION

SIR,—The enclosed letter which I have received from the Bishop of Birmingham may encourage the clergy and ministers of other denominations to take up this supremely important matter.

Manchester, England. CHARLES W. MACARA.

[*Enclosure*]

BISHOP'S CROFT,
BIRMINGHAM, February 10, 1919.

Dear SIR CHARLES MACARA,—

The events in the industrial world of the last week or two have shown to all who have marked them carefully that nothing but co-operation between all the classes engaged in productive business life can solve the problems connected with labour unrest. Had we availed ourselves of the services of the Industrial Council appointed by the Government in 1911 we should have nipped in the bud some of the dangerous growths which, if allowed to develop, are not only difficult to destroy, but are liable to spread.

A general lowering of the moral standard of business life must follow upon strife between the component parts of our industrial world. The times are very critical. The United States, Japan and even Germany are all buckling on their armour for the war of business competition which lies ahead, whilst our own people are quarrelling and Government Departments cannot be called over active in the encouragement of enterprise. We must hasten to become friends all round, and our public authorities must foster industry if we are to maintain our great position in the world's markets.

To me, however, the consideration is, that unless all classes realize their interdependence before God, and strive to bring out in the social life the principle of mutual helpfulness, all the preaching of Christianity is proved to be ineffective for the national well-being.

It is because such a body as the Industrial Council, consisting of experienced Representatives of Capital and Labor, with equal rights, will hasten this fitting co-operation that it makes such a strong appeal to one's moral sense. One sad thing in present-day conditions is the suspicion which exists on the part of the employed, and which is the offspring of a not unnatural ignorance of the difficulties of the employer.

Would it not be easy for the Industrial Council to encourage certain foundation principles between those who employ, and those whose manual labor produces the final result in industry?

.The first essential for peaceful working is that " all the cards shall be upon the table." Ignorance is the parent of mistrust. Surely if the exact position were shown to men by the employer, it would generally be seen that all the wiser heads of businesses were anxious in their own interest to pay more and not less wages. In America men are warned that if they cannot earn up to a certain standard they are not worth employing. As a rule, the higher the wages the greater the production, and the cheaper the product. If employers are frank with the men there must be similar openness on the other side. Then there will grow up a desire throughout the whole business to work with heart to produce the best possible. This will brighten the whole industrial life, and a contented working class means a rapidly developing trade.

I regard this kind of industrial life as something likely to make this earth a little more like heaven, this world more like what God would have it be. Therefore I trust the day is very near when the Industrial Council will be used to the fullest extent, labor unrest being thereby killed, and our England not only a more prosperous, but a happier and a nobler land. H. R. BIRMINGHAM.

OUR SOLDIERS AND PROHIBITION

SIR,—More than a million and a half American voters are coming back to the United States this year, or next, with some definite plans about the elections in 1920. They know quite well that, in addition to their own ballots, they will have a far-reaching influence on the political developments of the next sixteen months. For that reason, it may interest you to know how the members of the American Expeditionary Forces in France and Germany are discussing the questions that are now coming to the front.

It is a serious mistake to believe that the doughboys will favor a Presidential candidate drawn from the personnel of the army. Very frankly, they are weary of army life, army authority, and the glamor of military pomp. They enthuse over some officers, but the objects of their sincere regard are the men who actually led them in the fighting. Some colonels, captains and lieutenants might control the ballots of their own companies or regiments, but officers of higher rank would not be flattered by an accurate forecast of the votes they could command in the American army.

The American soldier is, as the English say, thoroughly " fed up " on military control and would flinch from the thought of placing in the White House a man selected from military circles. In an overwhelming majority of cases the doughboy's one ambition is to get out of uniform and settle down to the job of winning the battles of peace. His vote will go to the man who in his opinion is best suited to the task of restoring and maintaining national prosperity.

As a general rule, the doughboy will come back home with some deep-rooted theories about what he considers unfair treatment. He believes that he has been charged exorbitant prices by the French. He